UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

CES/810
24 March 1994

Original: ENGLISH

STATISTICAL COMMISSION and ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Forty-second plenary session
(Paris, 13-17 June 1994)

REVIEW OF ECE STATISTICAL PUBLICATIONS

Note prepared by the secretariat

1. At the forty-first plenary session of the Conference in 1993, a detailed report (ECE/CES/41) was presented to the meeting concerning the action taken by the Bureau and the secretariat following the review of ECE's publications. Since then two further progress reports have been prepared and discussed by the Bureau at their October and February meetings. To inform the Conference of the action undertaken since last year, the Bureau asked the secretariat to prepare the current summary as well as the table of the approved changes which have been or will be implemented for each of the publications reviewed by the Working Group in 1992.

RESULTS OF THE DETAILED INTRA-SECRETARIAT REVIEW

2. Given the lack of specific recommendations in the report of the Working Group, the Bureau of the Conference asked the secretariat to make a detailed study of existing publications and to formulate recommendations concerning the discontinuation of publications of low interest and where needed to suggest improvements to the format and substance of the remaining statistical publications. This detailed intra-secretariat review programme began in March 1993 and has covered all the nine subject matter areas and all the statistical publications included in the original report of the Working Group. For each of the following subject matters: Agriculture, Forestry, Energy, Transport, Social Statistics, Environment, Steel, Engineering and Chemical statistics a comprehensive study of ECE's publications was made. The studies then served

as discussion documents for the consultations the Statistical Division had with the subject matter divisions about how the bulletins could be improved within the secretariat's current resources and means. Where necessary, the resulting proposals were presented to the various PSBs (Principal Subsidiary Bodies of the ECE, of which the Conference is one) for approval before implementation.

3. A summary of the changes which have or will be undertaken are presented in tabular form in an annex to this paper. The 40 publications which were reviewed by the Working Group vary considerably in frequency and nature. While the large majority of them are published annually, some ten appear much more infrequently at five-yearly, four-yearly and two-yearly intervals. Two of the publications were in fact one-time studies and two others are published on an ad hoc basis. Although the review was limited to ECE statistical publications, close to half of the reviewed publications could arguably be described as analytical studies as well, since their textual parts are equal or larger than their statistical parts. Finally, the publications differ notably in length from some 50 pages to 550 pages.

CONCLUSIONS

4. As result of the review ECE statistical publications programme has undergone a number of significant changes. Seven publications have already been terminated and one more may be cancelled (see attached table). Furthermore, the overhaul of the individual bulletins has lead to the eliminations of many tables while others have been condensed or improved in various ways. However, the resulting reduction in pages have often been compensated by the introduction of analytical texts and summary tables into several of the bulletins. In a few cases, it has not been possible to implement all the recommended changes immediately, due to two other ongoing trends in the ECE: questionnaire harmonisation with other international organisations and changes in the technology used for producing ECE's publications. Hence, a two stage approach has sometimes had to be adopted.

5. Decision 0(45) of the Economic Commission of Europe asked the Conference of European Statisticians to <u>periodically</u> review the statistical publications. The Conference, therefore, may want to return to this topic in a couple of years and assess the effect of the first review. In the meanwhile, the Conference may wish to ask the secretariat of the ECE together with other international organisations which publish statistics in similar fields, to consider how they can develop greater collaboration in the area of dissemination of statistical information. During this review, account was taken of the publications of other international institutions, and the ECE Statistical Division is now planning joint publications in some areas of statistics.

Publications Evaluated and Changes Implemented

Title of evaluated publication in 1992	Changes	Year of change	Symbol
ENERGY			
Annual Bulletin of General Energy Statistics for Europe Vol.XXI-1988	Discontinued	1993	E/F/R.93. II.E.13 (Last issue)
Annual Bulletin of Electric Energy Statistics for Europe Vol.XXXV-1990	Contents reviewed. Textual analysis included. Summary tables with key indicators introduced. Improved coverage of heat production and distribution.Timeliness to be improved through mini-questionnaire.	1994	Still to be published
Annual Bulletin of Gas Statistics for Europe Vol.XXXV-1991	Contents reviewed. Textual analysis included. Summary tables with key indicators introduced. Improved table presentation.Timeliness improved through mini-questionnaire.	1994	Still to be published
Annual Bulletin of Coal Statistics for Europe Vol.XXIV-1991	Contents reviewed. Textual analysis included. Summary tables with key indicators introduced. Timeliness improved through the use of forecaste data from other questionnaires.	1994	Still to be published
Energy Balances for Europe and North America 1970-2000.	Ad hoc publication. Future editions will also contain historical energy balances compiled in-house.	Ad hoc	

Energy reforms in Central and Eastern Europe - The First Year- ECE Energy Series No. 7	One-time study.	Ad hoc	
TRANSPORT			
Annual Bulletin of Transport Statistics. Vol XLI -1991	Contents reviewed. Considerable reduction of tables in section of general statistics. Elimination of data series with poor response. Improved table presentation. Changes in the published data according to new joint transport questionnaire under preparation.	1995	To be published in 1995
Statistics on Road Traffic Accidents in Europe Vol. XXXVI -1991	Contents reviewed. Elimination of some data with poor response. Adjustment of data series according to new joint questionnaire under preparation.	1995	To be published in 1995
STEEL			
Annual Bulletin of Steel Statistics for Europe	Contents reviewed. Reduction in number of pages. Lay-out will be further improved when a new PC system is introduced, probably during 1994	1994	Still to be published
Statistics of World Trade in Steel	Review of publication and data collection procedure. Now only countries not in the COMTRADE database get questionnaire. New PC system has improved data presentation and legibility.	1993	E/F/R.93. II.E.34

Iron and Steel Scrap	Bi-annual publication. Fifth updating in 1991 had an improved presentation with several short texts. The sixth updating of the Iron and Steel Scrap which should have taken place in 1993 was replaced by special study on the Impacts and developments in the recovery and preparation of scrap metal on the development of the world iron and steel industry.	1991 1993	E.91.II.E.37 E.93.II.E.28
The Steel Market	More analytical than statistical. Last edition had 80 pages of text and an improved presentation.	1993	E.93.II.E.30
ENGINEERING			
Bulletin of Statistics on World Trade in Engineering Products	Discontinued	1992	E/F/R.92.II.E.7 (Last issue)
Annual Review of Engineering Industries and Automation - Vols.I and II	Substituted by new single volume publication: World Engineering Industries and Automation. Performance and Prospects 1992-94.	1994	E.94.II.E.5
CHEMICALS			
Annual Bulletin of Trade in Chemical Products	Temporarily discontinued, may be published in 1994.	1991	E/F/R.91.II.E.28 (Last issue)
Annual Review of the Chemical Industry	Renamed The Chemical Industry in 1992- Annual Review. Production and Trade Statistics 1989-1991. The textual part has been extended and includes graphs. The statistical part has been improved through a condensing of the tables. Further rationalization will be implemented in the future.	1993	E.93.II.E.27

TIMBER AND FOREST PRODUCTS			
Annual Timber Bulletin. Vol XLIII. No. 2 - Survey of the structure and capacity of the wood-based panels industries	Completely reviewed by expert. The 1994 version will contain a more comprehensive analysis of the survey results. The new publication will be part of the "Geneva Forest and Forest Product Study Series" (GFFPSS).	1994	ISSN 0259-4323
Annual Timber Bulletin. Vol XLIII. No. 3 - Monthly Prices for Forest Products	Overhauled by expert and in the future will contain price information previously published in No. 7 in the old series. Will be published in 1994 in a new format.	1994	Timber Bulletin V.XLVII (1994) No.1
Annual Timber Bulletin. Vol XLIII. No. 4 - Forest product statistics 1985-89	Completely reformed, including contents and format. Information previously appearing in another publication (No. 9 in the old series of Forest product statistics) has been included.	1994	Timber Bulletin V.XLVII (1994) No.2
Annual Timber Bulletin. Vol XLIII. No. 5 - Annual Forest Products - Market Review 1989-90.	Reviewed and published in a more user-friendly format. New chapter added on changing sources of wood supply.	1994	Timber Bulletin V.XLVII (1994) No.3
Annual Timber Bulletin. Vol XLIII. No. 6 - Forest product trade flows 1989-90.	Completely reviewed. UN COMTRADE data are now used rather than questionnaires and data are shown in both value and volume flows.	1994	Timber Bulletin V.XLVII (1994) No.5

Annual Timber Bulletin. Vol XLIII. No. 7 - Monthly prices for forest products.	Combined with No. 3 in the old series on Monthly prices. The continuation of this collection in the future will be depend on a study currently undertaken by an expert.	1994	Discontinued as a separate bulletin
Annual Timber Bulletin. Vol XLIII. No. 8 - Forest product markets in 1990 and prospects for 1991.	No major changes were recommended, only format changes were made to improve readability.	1994	Timber Bulletin V.XLVII (1994) No.6
Annual Timber Bulletin. Vol XLIII. No. 9 - Forest product statistics 1985-June 1990.	Combined with No. 4 in the old series on Forest product statistics.	1994	Discontinued as a separate bulletin
Conversion Factors for Forest Products 1987.	The responses to the 1993 survey are currently being analyzed. When published some changes in presentation and format will be made.	1994	Timber Bulletin V.XLVII (1994) No.6
Forest Fire Statistics 1985 -1988	Changes in format and layout have greatly improved its reader-friendliness. Will in 1994 become part of the Timber Bulletin Series to ensure that it gets a wider distribution.	1994	Timber Bulletin V.XLVII (1994) No.5
Agriculture			

Annual Agricultural Review for Europe. Vol. 1 - General Review	Discontinued	1993	Last issue in 1992 ECE/AGRI/ 120, Vol.I
Annual Agricultural Review for Europe. Vol. 2 - Agricultural Trade	Now published as Vol.1. Due to post vacancies the 1993 publication was limited to statistical data. Will be further reviewed by the Committee on Agriculture in May 1994.	1993	ECE/AGRI/ 123, Vol.1
Annual Agricultural Review for Europe. Vol. 3 - The Grain Market	Now published as Vol.2. After 1994, the bulletin will be discontinued as an annual publication and will only appear on an ad hoc basis with occasional economic studies on grain.	1994	ECE/AGRI/ 125, Vol.II
Annual Agricultural Review for Europe. Vol. 4 - The Livestock and Meat Market	Now published as Vol.3. Otherwise no change.	1994	Still to be published
Annual Agricultural Review for Europe. Vol. 5 - The Milk and Dairy product Market	Now published as Vol.4. Otherwise no change.	1994	Still to be published
Annual Agricultural Review for Europe. Vol. 6 - The Egg Market	Discontinued.		

Annual Prices of Agricultural Products and Selected Inputs in Europe and North America	Substantial improvements resulting from a revised questionnaire, with the introduction of analytical texts and with a focus on transition countries.	1994	ECE/AGRI/ 126
Output and Inputs in Agriculture of Countries in the ECE Region	Recommended to be cancelled, decision will be taken by the Committee on Agriculture in May 1994.	1990	Last issue in 1990 ECE/AGRI/ 108
SOCIAL STATISTICS			
Annual Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe 1980, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989- Vol.XXXIII - 1991	Substantial changes to the bulletin were approved by the Conference and the Committee on Human Settlements in 1993, among the planned main changes are the introduction of analytical texts into the bulletin, effective with the 1994 issue, the use of graphs and charts and restructuring the contents of the bulletin.	1994	Still to be published

ENVIRONMENT			
CES. Statistical Standards and Studies - Environment Statistics in Europe and North America. An Experimental Compendium. 1987	A second and much larger compendium focusing on the relationship between agriculture and the environment- was published in 1992: The Environment in Europe and North America. A third one is currently under preparation and due to be published in 1995. Each issue focuses on a different topic and is presented differently.	1992	E.92.II. E.14
Strategies and Policies for Air Pollution Abatement - 1990 Review. 1991	The reviews take place every four year. The current 1994 review is under preparation. No major change is planned in the publication.	1995	To be published in 1995
Air Pollution Studies No. 7 - Assessment of long-range Transboundary Air Pollution. 1991	Annual publicatoin in a series called "Air Pollution Studies". Each issue treats a different aspect of air pollution. The studies are more analytical than statistical. The ninth volume in the series was published in 1993.	1993	ECE/EB.AI R/34
Water Use and Water Pollution Control: Trends, policies, prospects. 1989	One-time study	Ad hoc	